



THE CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION OF VICTORIA

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REPORT

TO

MEMBERS

CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION OF VICTORIA

FROM

THE FEBRUARY 1983 MEETING

OF

COUNCIL

REPORT FROM COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 1983

Co-operative Strength in Victoria

At the February 1983 meeting, Council of the Co-operative Federation of Victoria noted the following statistics :

Co-operatives incorporated under the Co-operation Act 1981 :

<u>Type of Co-operative</u>	Year ending <u>1980</u>	Year ending <u>1981</u>	Year ending <u>1982</u>
Producers	58	69	67
Trading	108	105	106
Community Settlement	29	29	29
Community Advancement	1022	1022	1038
Credit	213	207	207
Associations	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
TOTAL	1445 ====	1437 ====	1452 ====

658 Co-operatives (including 644 Community Advancement Co-operatives) are operating under the terms of a Treasurer's Guarantee to banks or other approved funding bodies guaranteeing the repayment of loans made by such banks to those Co-operatives in accordance with the Co-operation Act.

Co-operatives incorporated under the Companies (Victoria)

Code :

In addition to the above, there are 15 Co-operative Companies incorporated before 1953 under the Companies Act which elected not to transfer to become Co-operative Societies when the first Co-operation Act was introduced in Victoria.

Co-operatives incorporated under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act :

A further 6 Co-operatives continue their operations under this Act.

Co-operative Housing Societies :

1930 Co-operatives (Terminating Building Societies) are incorporated under this legislation.

Building Societies Act :

There are 20 Permanent Building Societies with a Co-operative Capital Structure.

Principle 6 of the internationally recognised Principles of Co-operation states :

"All Co-operative organisations in order to best serve the interests of their members and their communities should actively co-operate in every practical way with other Co-operatives at local, national and international level".

If current Co-operative membership in the Co-operative Federation of Victoria is a criteria of adherence by Victoria Co-operatives to this Principle then by far the majority of them are falling short of practicing true Co-operation.

Credit Societies are affiliated to the Co-operative Federation of Victoria through the Victorian Credit Co-operative Association. By increased inter co-operative services through the State's umbrella Co-operative organisation a more cohesive, recognisable Co-operative sector would be developed and be identifiable in the State to the benefit of all Co-operatives.

Incorporation of the Federation

The Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd. was formally registered as an incorporated Federation under the Co-operation Act 1981 by the Registrar of Co-operative Societies on 8th February 1983.

The next task is to appoint the first Board of Directors. A meeting for this purpose has been called for 18th April 1983 in line with the Federation Rules. A notice to this effect has been sent to all members.

The Rules of the incorporated Federation, passed by members at the formative meeting and approved by the Registrar are in the process of being printed. They will be distributed to all members as soon as possible.

Co-operative Research

Council has been advised by the Co-operative Federation of Australia that the Australian National University has awarded a scholarship for a Ph.D.thesis to be developed, concerned with history, development and significance of the Co-operative sector in Australia.

The Co-operative Federation of Australia recognises that the absence of a comprehensive analysis of the history of Co-operation in Australia is a sad deficit on the Australian account. This research project of a valuable pioneer nature could also be used as a contribution to the Bi-centennial History of Australia.

At this point of time the thesis is proposed to examine, inter alia, the following areas :

- early Australian co-operation
- evolution of a Co-operative sector
- legislation and other institutional responses
- case studies
- extent of Australian Co-operation
- Australian Co-operation in the international area

(Did you know Australia was represented at the formation meeting of the International Co-operative Alliance in London in 1895?)

It is anticipated research will be undertaken in each State. State Federations are being invited to assist not only in some contribution to local costs but also, more significantly, in provision of local knowledge from key personnel and to assist the researcher obtain the fullest background possible.

Study for development of Co-operatives in Schools

Last month we reported that applications are being invited for a Research Officer to undertake this study.

For detailed information of possible interested parties the actual advertisement is reproduced below with additional advice that experience in as wide a range of Co-operative activity as possible is desirable.



Holmesglen College
of TAFE

Research Officer/ Curriculum Adviser Transition Programs: Co-operative Education

Reference 83/8

Transition Education offers a range of programs directed at unemployed young people between the ages of 15-24.

An education program to establish an understanding of the theory and practice of co-operatives is to be undertaken in 1983, for implementation in 1984. This program would involve gathering and analysis of material on pre co-operative education, liaison with Transition staff to stimulate interest in the area, development of appropriate curriculum material, and ensuring that a practical pilot scheme in co-operative education can be undertaken in the Transition area in 1984.

Qualifications: Appropriate tertiary qualifications, some experience in research and an understanding and experience of community employment co-operatives are all desirable. Most importantly though, the successful applicant will need to have initiative, enthusiasm, a capacity for hard work and a commitment to the area.

Salary: In the range \$19,964-\$23,617. This will be a contract appointment to 31/12/83.

The successful applicant will be located at the Caulfield campus of the Holmesglen College of TAFE, and will advise a Steering Committee.

Closing date: Written applications to the Director by 5.00 p.m., 9 March, 1983: Holmesglen College of TAFE, P.O. Box 42, Chadstone, 3148.

For further information and a duty statement please phone 873 2213.

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As stated last month, this project was developed from initiatives by this Federation arising from participation by your Executive Officer in a UNESCO seminar in Paris on the subject of Co-operatives in Schools throughout the World.

Financial Institutions Duty

The submission from the Federation to the Co-operative Societies Advisory Council concerning imposition of the State Financial Institutions Duty on Victorian Co-operative Societies previously exempted from payment of stamp duty on cheques was considered at the February meeting of that Council.

Federation Council has been advised that the Advisory Council is unable to recommend exemption for Co-operative businesses from a tax imposed on all businesses. As with other businesses, Co-operatives are entitled to pass this additional cost on to their participating members.

Community Employment Co-operatives Development Programme

The Education and Training Unit of the Programme organised a worthwhile conference for members of Co-operatives participating in the programme and other interested persons at Lorne over the weekend before the disastrous bush fires burnt out the surrounding countryside.

Under the general theme "Co-operatives - a tool for social change?" the conference concerned itself in group discussion and plenary sessions with topics which included :

"Industrial possibilities and problems caused by Co-operatives"

"Are Co-operatives a tool for social change?"

"The basis of our commitment to Co-operatives"

The venue was good, the weather was kind, the live-in type of Conference made for relaxed discussion and produced a good level of debate. Two Government Ministers attended.

The new application of an old philosophy has much to commend it but a great deal of mutual understanding and interchange is required for the experience of the older established traditional Co-operative, concentrating on factors other than production, to be used and adapted by the fresh thinking solutions advanced for current community needs. An increasing two way flow of intercommunication is essential. This conference contributed to this aim.

Review of Community Employment Co-operative Development Programme

The February meeting of the Federation Council spent considerable time finalising a review of the Federation's involvement in this Co-operative Development Programme. The review has been submitted to the Minister of Employment and Training for use in the Ministry's overall evaluation of the Programme.

The Co-operative Federation of Australia

Advice has been received that the President Mr. John Herring of New South Wales has resigned from the Council of the Co-operative Federation of New South Wales and consequently from the Council and Presidency of the Co-operative Federation of Australia. The Vice President, Mr. Trevor Poustie of Western Australia is currently acting Chairman.

The Council Meeting planned for 17th February has been deferred to 17th March to be held in Melbourne.